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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/835,820	04/17/2001	Tomohisa Hoshino	P 280192 EL00028CDC	5539
909	7590	07/27/2004	EXAMINER	
PILLSBURY WINTHROP, LLP			LUU, CHUONG A	
P.O. BOX 10500			ART UNIT	
MCLEAN, VA 22102			PAPER NUMBER	
			2825	

DATE MAILED: 07/27/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/835,820

Applicant(s)

HOSHINO ET AL.

Examiner

Chuong A Luu

Art Unit

2825

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 03 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 May 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 and 11-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 and 11-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-9 and 11-17 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

## **PRIOR ART REJECTIONS**

### **Statutory Basis**

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

### **The Rejections**

Claims 1-9 and 11-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Subrahmanyam et al. (U.S. 6,693,030 B1).

Subrahmanyam discloses a precleaning process with

Respect to claims:

**(1); (8); (14)** forming a barrier layer on an insulating film covering a substrate;  
exposing the barrier layer to a first gas atmosphere containing a reducing gas  
and free of plasma at an elevated substrate temperature;

forming, after said exposing said barrier conductor layer to said first gas atmosphere, a metal film on the barrier conductor layer by a CVD process;  
exposing said metal film to a second gas atmosphere at an elevated substrate temperature (see column 11, lines 13-30);

(2) wherein said first reducing gas atmosphere is selected from any of the group consisting of hydrogen (see column 11, lines 24-26);

(4) wherein said second gas atmosphere includes hydrogen (see column 11, lines 28-30);

(7) wherein said barrier conductor layer is formed of any of Ta or TaN (see column 11, lines 13-20);

(9) wherein said reducing gas is hydrogen (see column 11, lines 24-26);

(11) further comprising, after said step of forming said metal film, a thermal annealing process applied to said metal film (see column 11, lines 13-30);

(6); (13) wherein said metal film is formed of Cu (see column 11, lines 25-30);

(15) wherein said step of forming said barrier conductor layer is conducted by a PVD process (see column 11, lines 15-20);

(16) wherein said second gas atmosphere includes nitrogen (see column 11, lines 13-30)

(17) wherein said step of exposing said metal film to said second gas atmosphere is conducted under a pressure of about 40 Pa (see column 9, lines 66-67).

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Chuong A Luu whose telephone number is (571) 272-1902. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (6:30-3:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Matthew Smith can be reached on (571) 272-1907. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

CAL  
March 2, 2004

  
CARIDAD EVERHART  
PRIMARY EXAMINER